



Reel in the Facts About Mercury in Fish

Fish are fun to catch and good to eat. Fish are healthy food - high in protein and low in fat.

But too much of a good thing can be bad for you. All fish contain some mercury, a contaminant. Eating too much mercury-contaminated fish can be harmful to your health and your child's health.

Keep Eating Fish

The benefits of eating fish outweigh the health risks as long as you follow guidelines on how much fish to eat. These guidelines will help you limit your exposure to mercury while still enjoying healthy meals of fish.

If you are pregnant, planning to be pregnant, breast-feeding, or have children under the age of 15, read on to learn how to include fish as part of healthy, balanced food choices.



This brochure will help you to:

- * decide which fish to eat,
- * determine how often to eat fish, and
- * identify fish with high levels of contaminants.

Mercury

Small amounts of mercury can damage a brain that is just starting to form and grow. That's why young children, babies in the womb and breast-fed babies are at most risk. Too much mercury may affect a child's behavior and lead to learning problems later in life.

Mercury can also harm older children and adults, but it takes larger amounts. It may cause tingling, prickling or numbness in hands and feet or changes in vision.

Mercury can come from natural and man-made sources. Mercury in the air settles into lakes and rivers. It can then build up in fish. All fish have some mercury, including:

- * fish caught in Wisconsin lakes and rivers,
- * fish caught in waters in other states, and
- * fish you buy in the store or eat in a restaurant

However, you can't see, smell or taste mercury in fish. That's why it's important to know which fish are safer than others to eat.

Which Fish are More Likely to Contain Higher Amounts of Mercury?

- * larger fish
- * older fish
- * fish that feed on other fish (walleye, northern, bass)

Can't We Trim Away or Clean or Cook the Fish to Get Rid of the Mercury?

No, the mercury gets into the flesh. However, by removing fat when you clean and cook fish, you can help to reduce the amount of other contaminants like PCBs.

Mercury Cannot be Removed Through Cooking or Cleaning

However, by removing fat when you clean and cook fish, you can help to reduce the amount of other contaminants like PCBs.

Should I Just Stop Eating Fish?

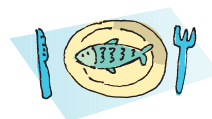
NO...just be sure to follow the guidelines presented in this brochure.

More Information.

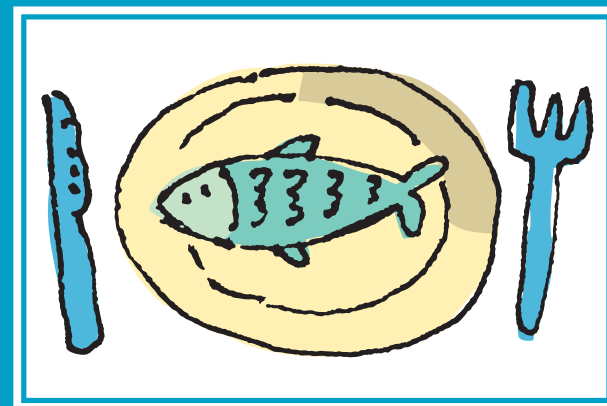
These are general guidelines based on mercury levels measured in fish throughout Wisconsin and levels of mercury found in commercial fish. Specific meal advice is available for eating fish from lakes and rivers that have been tested.

For information on mercury and other contaminants, please consult the full fish consumption advisory booklet. This booklet is available at your local Department of Natural Resources (DNR) office, your local health department, or on the web at dnr.wi.gov. You can also find more information on eating fish from one of these websites: dhfs.wi.gov; www.epa.gov; and www.fda.gov

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PPH 44031 (Rev. 05/04)



A Woman and Child's Guide to Eating Fish from Wisconsin



What you should know if you are pregnant, planning to be pregnant, breastfeeding or if you are a child under age 15. Includes safe eating guidelines for fish from Wisconsin lakes, ponds, and rivers and for fish bought in restaurants and stores.

Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services

Safe Eating Guideline for women who are pregnant, planning to be pregnant, or are breastfeeding and for children under age 15.

For most of Wisconsin's inland (non-Great Lakes) waters and fish bought in stores and restaurants*

WEEKLY

1 meal per WEEK



of Canned Light Tuna**
(6 oz. can = 1 meal)

AND



1 meal per WEEK

OR

Bluegill, sunfish, black crappie, white crappie, yellow perch, bullheads
Any commercial fish
(fish you buy in a store or restaurant)

MONTHLY

1 meal per MONTH



OF

Any sport fish species (sport fish are any fish you catch or are given, such as bass, walleye, northern, perch, or crappie). Sport fish are NOT fish you purchase in a store or restaurant.

NEVER

NEVER EAT



ANY SWORDFISH, SHARK, KING MACKEREL, OR TILEFISH

*On certain waters, where data indicate higher mercury levels, more restrictive advice is needed. Please visit our website at: dnr.wi.gov or call your local health dept.
**If you don't eat any other type of fish, you can safely eat 2 cans of light tuna per week.



Choose Fish Low in Mercury!

Guidelines below are for fish from Wisconsin lakes, ponds, and rivers and for fish bought in restaurants and stores.

Hang Me Up!





















Fish is good for you.
Eat fish low in mercury!



Hang Me Up!

SPORT CAUGHT:

COMMERCIAL:

Fish You Catch		Fish You Buy	
BLUEGILL  Mercury Level: <input checked="" type="radio"/> LOW <input type="radio"/> MED <input type="radio"/> HIGH	WHITE CRAPPIE  Mercury Level: <input checked="" type="radio"/> LOW <input type="radio"/> MED <input type="radio"/> HIGH	ATLANTIC SALMON  Mercury Level: <input checked="" type="radio"/> LOW <input type="radio"/> MED <input type="radio"/> HIGH	SHELLFISH (such as shrimp, scallops or lobster)  Mercury Level: <input checked="" type="radio"/> LOW <input type="radio"/> MED <input type="radio"/> HIGH
YELLOW PERCH  Mercury Level: <input checked="" type="radio"/> LOW <input type="radio"/> MED <input type="radio"/> HIGH	BLACK CRAPPIE  Mercury Level: <input checked="" type="radio"/> LOW <input type="radio"/> MED <input type="radio"/> HIGH	FLATFISH & FLOUNDERS  Mercury Level: <input checked="" type="radio"/> LOW <input type="radio"/> MED <input type="radio"/> HIGH	COD, OCEAN PERCH & HADDOCK  Mercury Level: <input checked="" type="radio"/> LOW <input type="radio"/> MED <input type="radio"/> HIGH
SMALLMOUTH BASS  Mercury Level: <input type="radio"/> LOW <input checked="" type="radio"/> MED <input type="radio"/> HIGH	CATFISH  Mercury Level: <input type="radio"/> LOW <input checked="" type="radio"/> MED <input type="radio"/> HIGH	CANNED "LIGHT" TUNA  Mercury Level: <input checked="" type="radio"/> LOW <input type="radio"/> MED <input type="radio"/> HIGH	CANNED "WHITE" TUNA  Mercury Level: <input type="radio"/> LOW <input checked="" type="radio"/> MED <input type="radio"/> HIGH
LARGEMOUTH BASS  Mercury Level: <input type="radio"/> LOW <input checked="" type="radio"/> MED <input type="radio"/> HIGH	CARP  Mercury Level: <input type="radio"/> LOW <input checked="" type="radio"/> MED <input type="radio"/> HIGH	HALIBUT  Mercury Level: <input type="radio"/> LOW <input checked="" type="radio"/> MED <input type="radio"/> HIGH	TUNA  Mercury Level: <input type="radio"/> LOW <input checked="" type="radio"/> MED <input type="radio"/> HIGH
NORTHERN PIKE  Mercury Level: <input type="radio"/> LOW <input type="radio"/> MED <input checked="" type="radio"/> HIGH	WALLEYE  Mercury Level: <input type="radio"/> LOW <input type="radio"/> MED <input checked="" type="radio"/> HIGH	SWORDFISH  Mercury Level: <input type="radio"/> LOW <input type="radio"/> MED <input checked="" type="radio"/> HIGH	SHARK  Mercury Level: <input type="radio"/> LOW <input type="radio"/> MED <input checked="" type="radio"/> HIGH